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## **PRESERVING MEMORIES**

### **Hobby Becomes Home-based Business, Pays Dividends**

Tony and Lori Melendez have turned their long-time hobby into a productive, home-based business. Equipped with good people skills, knowledge of the video business and creativity, Tony and Lori opened Melendez Video Services, Inc., in Amherst, Ohio, in October of 2002. The business provides the full gamut of professional video services--photo video keepsakes, home movie transfers, video duplication, video editing, DVD transfers, home movie transfers, video tape repair, and more. Its customers include both the consumer and the commercial user in Lorain County and the western Cleveland suburbs.

Melendez Video Services provides a quick and quality, cost-effective video service, available at the customer's convenience. Cutting edge technology and old fashion service is what Melendez Video Services is all about. The company's favorite service is creating the photo keepsake video of anniversaries and other "special" occasions. "Taking a collection of a customer's most precious memories and transforming them into a lasting, timeless masterpiece to enjoy again and again is not only emotional for the customer but self satisfying as well," says Tony.

While doing what you like and earning income as well is extremely rewarding, the road to entrepreneurship had its many challenges. Tony, being of Hispanic origin, had to learn the English language well and become a bilingual person to compete in the business arena. The next obstacle was to obtain start-up capital to purchase the video equipment. National City Bank provided equipment financing guaranteed by a U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Express term loan in the amount of \$51,700 as well as a business line of credit in the amount of \$10,000.00. Tony said, "The working relationship between SBA and National City Bank gave us the confidence that we would be able to open our business no matter what challenge we came up against. Steve Lucas of National City Bank was a great source of guidance throughout the process."

In their first full year of operation, Melendez Video Services was the recipient of the National Award for "Best Sports Scholarship Video, Rookie of the Year 2003" from Home Video Studio, Inc. With this initial success have come plans for expansion. The Melendez' next business challenge will be in expanding their business even further into the Cleveland area.